GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:601
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2000
ASTHMA PATIENTS
AMAR ROY PRADHAN

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidence of Asthma is increasing in Delhi as well as in other States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to tackle this disease?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

(SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM)

(a)to(c): A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 601 FOR 9.5.2000

According to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, rough estimates show that about 5-10% of adults in India currently suffer from Asthma. However, there is no specific study to show that adult asthma patients are increasing in the country. Preliminary findings of the study conducted by Vallabhbhai Patel Chest Institute (VPCI), Delhi during 1996, has revealed an increasing prevalence of bronchial asthma among school going children in Delhi. Separately, it has been confirmed by WHO that there is 40% increase in asthma globally during the last decade.

It has been reported that allergens like pollen and house dust, air pollution (indoor/outdoor), infections like fungi etc. can trigger off asthma attacks. Genetic predispositions and stress also play an important role in causing and aggravating asthma.
In allopathy, there is presently no cure for asthma, although the disease can be controlled by modern medicine. Apart from providing asthma treatment and case management facilities in hospitals, Government is encouraging IEC activities to create public awareness on asthma throughout the country. These activities include printing and distribution of literature in regional languages, including Do`s and Dont`s, formation of Asthma Societies through NGOs and observation of World Asthma Day etc.

In rural areas to tackle the problem of indoor air pollution which can cause/aggravate asthamatic conditions, use of smokeless chullahas and cooking gas are encouraged to replace conventional cooking fuels. Besides, in urban areas, Government has recently launched several measures to control pollution caused by automobiles, industry etc.